



PRESS NOTICE

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November 1, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Two Men Plead Guilty Bank Fraud in Connection to Property in Myrtle Beach

Columbia, South Carolina ---- United States Attorney Bill Nettles stated today that Joseph Robert Guernsey, age 39, of Myrtle Beach, SC, and Benedict Guthrie Olberding, age 33, of Mooresville, NC, pled guilty in federal court in Florence, to bank fraud, a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1344. United States District Judge R. Bryan Harwell of Florence accepted the pleas and will impose sentence after he has reviewed the presentence reports which will be prepared by the U.S. Probation Office.

Evidence presented at the change of plea hearing established that from March 2007 to June 2009, Guernsey and Olberding were involved in a scheme to defraud various financial institutions. In furtherance of the scheme, Olberding paid Guernsey \$183,000.00 to get someone to purchase Olberding's beach house in Myrtle Beach. Olberding was a North Carolina mortgage broker and Guernsey owned and operated Southern Auto Sales in Myrtle Beach at the time. They applied for loans totaling \$1,000,000.00 falsely claiming

the purchaser was working for Guernsey making \$15,000.00 per month, and the purchase was for a primary residence.

Mr. Nettles stated the maximum penalty Guernsey and Olberding can receive is a fine of \$1,000,000.00 and/or imprisonment for 30 years, plus a special assessment of \$100.00.

The case was investigated by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Assistant United States Attorney William E. Day, II, of the Florence office handled the case.

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